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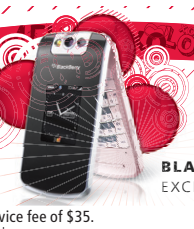

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Bus driver fired over blog

MetroExclusive

DEREK MOSCATO
for Metro Vancouver

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Michael Cox, near his East Vancouver home yesterday, said he was fired for blogging about his experiences as a bus driver.

A Vancouver bus driver says he has been fired for publishing a blog that describes his day-to-day experiences on the job.

Michael Cox, who completed his training with Coast Mountain Bus Company in December, started a blog called Short Turns to share with the public what he was learning about operating a bus.

"The initial impetus for the blog was for friends and family — curious about my training — but soon I got more interested in blogging about transit in general, including other cities, and was writing entries each night after my shift," Cox told Metro in an exclusive interview.

He also blogged about Coast Mountain's response to this winter's snowstorms. He wrote that thousands of commuters were left stranded, but added that it was unavoidable under the circumstances.

On Jan. 15, Cox, who was still a probationary driver, received a phone call from his union representative, informing him that management was placing him on administrative leave.

The next day, Cox met with Coast Mountain management, who indicated that a complaint had been received about the Short Turns blog. They also informed him that probationary drivers could be fired for any reason.

Two hours later, he was officially terminated.

The blog had a growing local readership and was even followed by TransLink's own Buzzer blog. According to Cox, Jhenifer Pabillano, the Buzzer editor at TransLink, had at one point even asked him to contribute to the Buzzer's online site.

"I think it's foolish that they fired me rather than just talked to me about the blog," said Cox, who is 53 and lives in East Vancouver with his wife. "In my short tenure I was a very good driver in that I enjoyed customer interaction. I thought I was doing a good job."

"My naiveté was in thinking — if I thought about it at all — that I could write freely, on my own time, about work and not suffer repercussions for telling the truth."
Michael Cox

Derek Zabel, media relations manager for Coast Mountain, said yesterday the company does not comment on past employees for privacy reasons.

Jim Houlahan, vice-president of CAW 111, the union representing bus drivers, confirmed it was the blog that triggered the dismissal.

"My understanding is he was terminated because of the content of his blog," Houlahan said. "I believe he was critical of the Coast Mountain Bus Company's service plans during the snowstorm."

He added that the union looked into the facts and decided Cox was not discriminated against.

"Had I not been a probationary employee I most likely wouldn't have been fired," Cox said. "My naiveté was in thinking — if I thought about it at all — that I could write freely, on my own time, about work and not suffer repercussions for telling the truth."

WITH FILES FROM FERNANDO CARNEIRO

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Campaign aims to educate landlords
A new campaign is being launched by the City of Vancouver to educate landlords on appropriate conduct leading up to the 2010 Games. Landlords can be sued for forcing tenants out for no reason, and must give two months notice for legitimate evictions. **SOURCE: NEWS1130.COM**

Local

Booths will be open: U.S.

U.S. Customs says all 10 inspection booths it promised to have open during the Olympics will be in operation, even though the project to upgrade the Peace Arch border crossing by 2010 is behind schedule. It also promises to have extra lanes open at other Lower Mainland crossings.

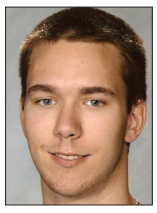
SOURCE: NEWS1130.COM

Crash suspect appears in court

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

An 18-year-old charged in the hit-and-run deaths of a doctor and his fiancée appeared briefly in a Vancouver courtroom yesterday.

Kurtis William Rock is charged with eight counts, including impaired driving and theft over $5,000, stemming from an alleged hit-and-run Saturday that killed Aneez Mohamed, 31, and fiancée Chanelle Morgan, 25.



Kurtis Rock

Rock, who has short black hair, wore a corrections-issue red sweatshirt during his brief appearance yesterday in Vancouver provincial court.

He will remain in custody through the weekend and is back in court Monday.

"The only way to describe the incident is an absolute tragedy," Rock's lawyer, Matthew Nathanson, said outside the courthouse.

"People are dismayed by what has happened."

Nathanson said the attention the case has garnered is understandable given its nature, but "it doesn't affect how we deal with the case."

He said the case would be tried in court, not in public, and would not comment on the condition of his client.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Matthew Nathanson, lawyer for Kurtis Rock, leaves Vancouver provincial court yesterday morning.

Mohamed and Morgan were crossing Fourth Avenue near the entrance to Granville Island when they were struck by a Buick SUV.

The couple, who had recently become engaged, were thrown several metres and died at the scene.

Police said a suspect fled on foot and was caught by a police dog while trying to jump into False Creek.

Teens arrested after stabbings

CRIME Two teenagers have been arrested and charged in connection with two recent stabbings in Vancouver.

One of the suspects, a 17-year-old Vancouver man, has been charged with four counts, including attempted murder, after a man was stabbed in a fight outside the Burrard SkyTrain station on Feb. 7.

Later that same afternoon, another young man was stabbed in a fight between a group of teenagers near the Plaza Of Nations.

Vancouver police Const. Jana McGuinness said a 17-year-old Langley man has been charged with assault in connection with that incident.

Neither of the suspects' names have been released because they are young offenders. **METRO VANCOUVER**

Park Board to look at extending art

SCULPTURES The Vancouver Park Board is considering allowing temporary sculptures that were installed as part of the 2005 Vancouver Biennale to remain in city parks until 2015.

A staff report that comes before the board on Monday recommends allowing sculptures to remain on park land past the originally agreed upon 18 months with written permission from the park board.

It also recommends allowing sculptures that were removed after the biennale to return as part of subsequent exhibitions. Written permission from the board would be required to bring back a past sculpture.

METRO VANCOUVER

Parkade crime rate down by a quarter

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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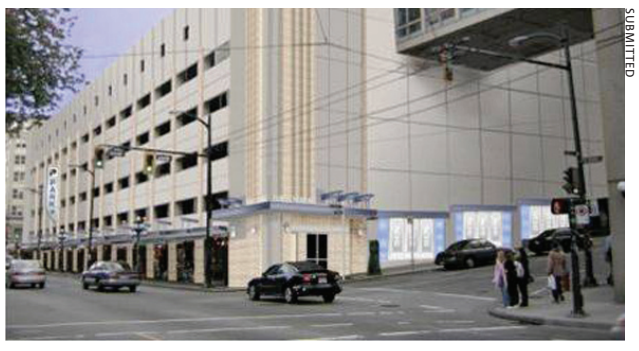
INITIATIVE Crime in most Vancouver parkades has gone down 25 per cent this year compared to last, thanks in large part to a safe parking program that just celebrated its one-year anniversary, police said yesterday.

The Safer Parking Initiative works in partnership with 25 facilities across the city, some of which reported several months without crime last year.

Vancouver Police Const. Jeff Campbell said the Harbour Centre parking garage on Cordova Street, which has seen a 93 per cent decrease in crime, is the perfect example of the program's success.



SUBMITTED

The Harbour Centre parking garage on Cordova Street has seen a 93 per cent reduction in crime since the launch of a police program to combat crime in parkades.

Doug Hume, vice president of Polaris Realty, which owns the lot, said the dark and dated building underwent a $5-million upgrade to make it brighter and cleaner.

"We improved lighting, painted the entire building inside and out," he said.

The parkade has also been outfitted with 17 surveillance cameras and eight alarm stations, which connect users to the security desk in nearby Harbour Centre.

"Because of these initiatives and our membership in the Safer Parking Initiative program, we've reduced crime by 93 per cent," Hume said. "It does work."

Stats

- One in every 1,300 vehicles parked in a public Vancouver lot is broken into or vandalized.
- In Safer Parking facilities, the chances are only 1 in 25,000.

ShareYourViews
vancouverletters@metronews.ca

News in brief

DEATH A 33-year-old Vancouver man has died after being hit by a semi truck downtown. He had been struggling with a loss prevention officer who suspected the man of shoplifting. As the victim tried to run away he fell in front of the oncoming truck, police said.

PROTEST A protest hut erected by Falun Gong practitioners outside the Chinese Consulate in Vancouver will be dismantled today, CBC News Online reports. The hut, which has been on Granville Street for eight years, has been ordered torn down by the City.

HIT-AND-RUN Police are looking for the suspect in a hit-and-run that sent a 22-year-old man to hospital in White Rock. The victim was walking along Oxford Street on Saturday night when a car struck a curb and hit him from behind, then ran into a stop sign and continued on. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Flying Tomato to shred Cypress Mountain this weekend

TARYN MCELHERAN
for Metro Vancouver

COMPETITION One of the world's top snowboarders, Shaun White, will be hitting the slopes at this weekend's halfpipe championship at Cypress Mountain in West Vancouver.

The 22-year-old American, an Olympic Gold medallist in 2006, has been dominating the slopes since he was a teenager.

Known as the Flying Tomato for his shock of red hair, White, who hails from Carlsbad, Calif., will be competing at the 2009 LG Snowboard FIS World Cup, which starts tomorrow and runs until Sunday.

Surgeries

- At the age of five, White was diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot, a series of heart malformations, which required him to undergo two separate surgeries.

DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES

Shaun (Flying Tomato) White will compete at the Snowboard World Cup, held at Cypress Mountain.

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Canada's Olympic athletes face high expectations in Vancouver at **metronews.ca/canada**

Blogs Hollywood Rants against the pointlessness of movie ratings and the Blog Street Bullies take a swipe at dismal Blue Jays free agent signings.

Controversial course approved by Abbotsford School Board

After months of debate, the Abbotsford School Board has agreed to offer its controversial Social Justice 12 class. The elective, which was supposed to be offered this year, will begin in September. Students will need permission from their parents because the course deals with homophobia and racism. METRO VANCOUVER

A luging investment in Olympics

Canadian luge team seeks $300K donor to slide them toward gold

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

For a mere $300,000 you could own a piece of Olympic history by helping transform a team of lugers into winners.

With only a year until the 2010 Games, Canada's national luge team hopes to attract a title sponsor by wearing "For Sale" signs on their helmets in their final two World Cup competitions this season.

"We are not looking for millions and/or freebies," said Tim Farstad, executive director of the Canadian Luge Association.

"(We) would like to establish a close relationship with a company that can help give us the final nudge onto the podium."
Tim Farstad, Canadian Luge Association

"(We) would like to establish a close relationship with a company that can help give us the final nudge onto the podium."

The national luge team, he added, is one of the only winter sports without a title sponsor.

The final two World Cup competitions will be held at Calgary and Whistler.

Officer's conduct was 'dangerous' in Taser incident, inquiry hears

TASER A man who was at YVR the night Robert Dziekanski died said he saw an RCMP officer put his knee on the victim's back after he was Tasered and thought it was a "very dangerous" thing to do.

Nick Le, a limo driver, was speaking at the Braidwood Inquiry into the Polish immigrant's death in Vancouver yesterday.

He told the inquiry he has studied martial arts all his life and recognized how dangerous the officer's actions were, news1130.com reports.

Le said he came forward as a witness after seeing one of the officers speaking of the incident on television and thinking that version of events was incorrect.

A senior RCMP manager who also testified yesterday withdrew an earlier statement that Dziekanski was brandishing a stapler before he was Tasered after a video suggested otherwise.

METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

POLICE West Vancouver Police Department Chief Const. Kash Heed said the current system of combating gang violence is failing and needs to be changed, cknw.com reports. Heed said a regionalized police department is needed to improve information sharing.

METRO VANCOUVER

Police crackdown poses AIDS risks: Advocacy groups

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association and five AIDS service organizations are concerned that more police in the Downtown Eastside could increase the risks of HIV and hepatitis transmission.

In a letter yesterday to Vancouver police Chief Jim Chu and Mayor Gregor Robertson, the organizations, which include B.C. Persons With AIDS Society and AIDS Vancouver, expressed concern that a crackdown in the Downtown Eastside could make drug users more likely to shoot up in alleys and use old needles.

The letter argues that drug users would avoid using needle exchanges and the supervised injection site if they fear police will arrest them or seize their drugs.

Ticketed violations rising

- According to a Vancouver police report, officers issued 467 tickets for violations of the Safe Streets Act in 2008, 202 more than the previous year, Metro reported yesterday.
- Panhandling, loitering and unlicensed vending violations were up 247 from 2007's total to 439.

The letter was written in response to the VPD's business plan that was presented to the police board in January.

The organizations also express concern that "no-go" judicial orders that restrict chronic bylaw offenders from entering certain parts of the city could restrict access to essential health care.

Armed man shot dead at his home by RCMP officer

TARYN MCELHRAN
for Metro Vancouver

A man was shot dead by a Mountie after coming out of his house armed with a shotgun in 100 Mile House.

The RCMP officers were responding to a report of a domestic dispute where a 56-year-old woman arrived at a neighbour's house saying she had been shot.

Soon after their arrival a man came out of the residence armed with a loaded shotgun. A Mountie pulled his gun and shot the man.

He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The woman was taken to a local hospital and eventually airlifted to Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops but died en route.

Both of the victims' names have been withheld until family members have been notified.

The RCMP investigation continues. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

SCAM A Maple Ridge man has been convicted of targeting elderly Americans in a telemarketing scam. Gordon Leonard Sloan, 74, has been sentenced to eight months in jail and will have to reimburse his victims, many of whom were scammed out of $800 to $3,000.

ALERT An Amber Alert about a wanted vehicle in Chilliwack sent out last night is false, news1130.com reports. According to the RCMP the text message is a fake and should not be forwarded.

GANGS The provincial government may be adding more police officers and prosecutors to battle gang violence in the Lower Mainland. Premier Gordon Campbell said he intends to provide extra resources needed to battle the problem.

DEATH A longtime advocate for victims of crime and the father of one of the children murdered by Vancouver serial killer Clifford Olson has died of cancer, CBC News Online reports. Gary Rosenfeldt, 67, started lobbying for more victims' rights after his son was murdered in 1981.

FIREARMS Solicitor general John Van Dongen said a report on controlling the spread of illegal firearms is being submitted to cabinet this week, cknw.com reports. Premier Gordon Campbell has hinted the province may beef up police and crown resources to battle gangs. METRO VANCOUVER

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- ✓ Increasing funding to provinces and territories to help them provide training programs for more Canadians
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Saudi court spares Canadian's life

The Saudi supreme court has rejected the death sentence of Mohamed Kohail of Montreal and has asked the lower court to revise its ruling. Kohail was convicted of murder and sentenced to a public beheading after a schoolyard brawl in 2007. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

ACE Aviation launches share bid

Air Canada's parent company, ACE Aviation Holdings Inc., said yesterday it launched a new $84-million offer for its preferred shares as it seeks to complete the windup of its operations. ACE said it aims to buy back 4.2 million outstanding preferreds at $20 each, giving holders the opportunity to deposit their shares if they did not do so under the previous offer. REUTERS

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Immigration target may drop: Minister

Rising unemployment could force the federal government to nudge shut the door on thousands of foreigners looking to make Canada their new home, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney says.

While Ottawa is sticking by its pledge to accept 240,000 to 265,000 permanent residents this year, the worsening economic outlook may prompt the government to rethink that target in the coming months, Kenney said yesterday.

"We don't want people coming to Canada and facing unemployment. We need to be sensitive to the changing labour market," he said.

Kenney said Canada, which accepted 247,000 permanent residents last year, so far "stands alone" among other nations by maintaining its levels for permanent residents. However, he conceded that may change, given economic conditions.

Federal and provincial immigration officials plan to meet next month and decide whether to tinker with the target.

But Kenney made clear his preference is to stick with the current target, calling new immigrants the "fuel" of the economy, once it turns around.

"We're going to need immigration as a source of economic growth. In the next decade, 100 per cent of our net labour market growth will be as a result of immigration," he said. "We don't want to turn off the tap of the future growth that is represented by immigration." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Present pledge

- The current target of up to 265,000 permanent residents includes up to 156,600 immigrants in the economic category, 71,000 in the family category and 37,400 in the humanitarian category.

CHRIS WATTIE/REUTERS

Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, left, and Canada's chief of the defence staff, Gen. Walt Natynczyk, speak to reporters at National Defence headquarters yesterday.

U.S. dances around 2011 departure

AFGHANISTAN Admiral Michael Mullen commands the world's dominant military force, but there is clearly still some terrain upon which he is loath to tread.

The chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff and his top commanders are travelling around the world trying to persuade governments to commit more forces to Afghanistan, and for longer periods of time.

But in a brief stop in Ottawa yesterday to meet Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Canadian counterpart, Gen. Walt Natynczyk, chief of defence staff, Mullen dared not address the new elephant in halls of NATO's Brussels headquarters — Canada's decision to quit the mission in 2011.

"Clearly combat forces who are there that make a difference are absolutely critical," he said when asked specifically about the Canadian withdrawal mandated by Parliament last year.

"I'm aware that 2011 is out there, but I have literally not discussed that policy or the impacts of it." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Groups aim to pressure Obama to oppose Alberta oilsands
A coalition of Canadian and U.S. environmental groups has launched a cross-border campaign ahead of Barack Obama's visit to Canada, urging the U.S. president to stick to his new energy plan amid possible pleas for him to support oil production from the Alberta oilsands. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Economic crisis adds to pressure

VANOC has tough year ahead

VANCOUVER 2010 **Games**

As Vancouver prepares to start the one-year countdown to the 2010 Winter Olympics organizers are increasingly aware that the global financial crisis will put them under extra pressure.

Last year, with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) distracted by human rights issues in China and the world captivated by the glossy Beijing Olympics, scant attention was paid to the 2010 Winter Games as Vancouver's preparations remained on course and on budget.

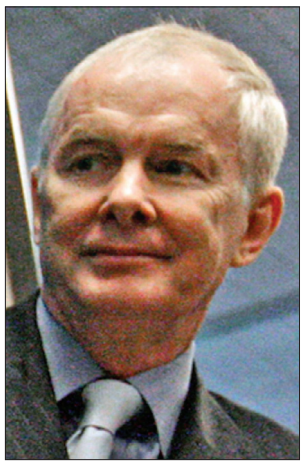
Now the Olympic spotlight has shifted, just as the economic crisis bites, turning what the Vancouver organizing committee (VANOC) had hoped would be a glorious sprint to the finish into a tiptoe through a financial minefield.

"I think the year ahead will be tenfold more challenging than any year we've had before," John Furlong, CEO of the committee, told Reuters ahead of tomorrow's one-year milestone.

"When Beijing was over it was as if this giant microscope in the sky just switched and pointed itself on Vancouver. We could feel this immediate pressure that we are next up.

"You start to realize what all these deadlines mean. We know precisely to the second when the opening ceremonies will start and there's no negotiating that.

"I had hoped that on Jan. 1 we would stop talking about budgets and we could hand our teams all the tools and resources to deliver what they have to deliver and get on with working on the experience of the Games.


John Furlong, VANOC CEO

"Well, there won't be a day, an hour, from here until Feb. 12, 2010, that we are not talking about budgets.

"I get up at 4:30 in the morning and the first thing I do every day is listen to the news and every single day it is the same. It's impacting everyone."

Certainly Furlong has woken up to plenty of bad news recently.

This month the VANOC chief has been busy trimming costs in an effort to rein in an operating budget that has shot up by $127 million to $1.75 billion.

"There won't be a day, an hour, from here until Feb. 12, 2010, that we are not talking about budgets."
John Furlong, CEO

At the same time, the City of Vancouver has been forced to take over financing of the athletes' village after cash-strapped developers of the $1-billion project watched their funding dry up in the withering economy.

City residents are bracing for yet another gigantic Olympic bill to land on their doorsteps, with Games security costs originally projected at $175 million expected to rocket to $1 billion.

REUTERS

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Return of Big Bang machine delayed

The giant particle collider built to reproduce Big Bang conditions for atomic study will now be restarted in September to allow time for $37 million in repairs, the European Organization for Nuclear Research said. It was originally planned to be restarted in the summer. **REUTERS**

World

"They should be allowed to rot in jail."

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on appropriate punishment for possible arsonists suspected of starting the nation's worst bushfires.

Operation Phoenix

As the death toll from Australia's bushfires looked to top 200, police launched Operation Phoenix, the nation's biggest arson investigation, to catch anyone who started a "suspicious" blaze. They noted there were no natural events such as lightning that would have sparked the fires. REUTERS

Israeli vote uncertain

Israel faces today what could be weeks of political uncertainty after an election that ended with clashing claims of victory by centrist Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and hawkish rival Benjamin Netanyahu.

With nearly complete final results giving Livni's Kadima party a slim edge of one or two seats over Netanyahu's right-wing Likud in the 120-member parliament, she pledged to lead a new government and invited him to join.

Netanyahu, pointing to what he called a large "nationalist camp" in parliament, said he would become prime minister and establish a governing coalition with rightist parties.

"With God's help I will lead the next government," Netanyahu, 59, told Likud supporters after exit polls yesterday gave Kadima a slim lead and right-wing parties some 64 parliamentary seats.

Addressing cheering Kadima activists, Livni, 50, said: "The Israeli public can smile again when we form the government." She would become Israel's first woman prime minister since Golda Meir governed in the 1970s.

The overall rightward shift in the Knesset will, in any case, dent hopes in U.S. President Barack Obama's administration for an Israeli coalition that push for peace with the Palestinians and other Arab neighbours after last month's war in the Gaza Strip. **REUTERS**

What next?

- President Shimon Peres in theory can nominate any legislator to try to form a government within 42 days.
- In practice, the leader of the biggest party is nominated after an election, but the president is not legally bound to do so.
- Peres' discussions with Knesset factions could take a week, and coalition negotiations could take a month.

Philippines **Dolphin rescue**

ROMEO RANOCO/REUTERS

Residents and fishermen watch hundreds of dolphins swim away from the shoreline in Orion, north of Manila, yesterday. Dozens of fishing boats tried to stop the disoriented dolphins from beaching themselves near Manila Bay, officials said.

Fierce storms sweep across Europe

FRANCE A storm swept across northern France yesterday, cutting off a total of 608,000 homes from the power grid, while high winds and gales hit Britain and Switzerland.

Winds of up to 140 km/h buffeted the northwestern coast, while inland gusts of up to 120 km/h had been recorded. It was the second major storm to hit France in less than three weeks after winds killed four people and left close to two million homes without power on Jan. 24 in the southwest.

Switzerland was swept by high winds on Monday night and yesterday morning, with gales reaching up to 150 km/h near the border with France.

Storms swept Britain yesterday, bringing heavy rain, fierce winds and more snow and sleet in some areas, with risk of serious flooding. **REUTERS**

News in brief

AFGHANISTAN Gunfire broke out near the presidential palace in the Afghan capital Kabul early today, killing at least one person and wounding several others, a security official said. Another official source said security forces shot dead a would-be suicide bomber outside the justice ministry, which is not far from the presidential palace. The incident occured when Afghan security forces exchanged fire while chasing a group of Taliban insurgents, the security official said.

FRANCE A Pakistani man went on trial in France yesterday for setting his ex-girlfriend on fire in 2005 after she refused to marry him, in a case that rights groups are using as as a symbol of violence against women in poor neighbourhoods. She suffered third-degree burns on 60 per cent of her body, fell into a coma and underwent many operations. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Haggling begins over U.S. stimulus

ECONOMY U.S. lawmakers worked late into the night yesterday haggling over a final package of tax cuts and spending initiatives in a package to fight the deepening recession.

"We're not there, but we've made a significant amount of progress in the last 10 hours," Senate majority leader and Democrat Harry Reid said after he wrapped up yesterday's final negotiating session.

The negotiations began shortly after the Senate passed its $838-billion version of a rescue plan to fight the recession. It voted 61-37 to approve its version, with the support of just three Republicans.

The House of Representatives has approved about $820 billion in spending and tax cuts. The negotiations, by a small group of lawmakers from the Senate and House, are aimed at reconciling the two versions.

U.S. President Barack Obama wants the Democrat-controlled Congress to deliver a package by this weekend so he can sign it into law, but a narrow coalition wants the price tag lowered to about $800 billion. **REUTERS**

"We're not there yet, but we've made a significant amount of progress."
Harry Reid,
Senate majority leader

Students, cops clash in Bangladesh

BANGLADESH More than 200 people including several policemen were injured in clashes with students of technical colleges across Bangladesh yesterday over a new, more stringent academic policy.

At least 30 vehicles including at least four police vans were damaged as police fired teargas shells to disperse stone-throwing students.

The violence was reported from at least 10 cities and towns across the country. Police arrested at least 20 students for violence.

New school rules

- Students would be expelled if they failed in any of exam subjects, and only able to resume their studies in the next year.
- In the past, students could appear for a supplementary exam to pass and stay in their courses.

The violence erupted as police acted upon students vandalizing vehicles and demanding cancellation of the new academic policy. **REUTERS**

Dalai Lama award angers China

CRITICISM China yesterday expressed its anger at an Italian award for exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama and warned of unspecified consequences in relations.

The Nobel Peace Prize-winning Dalai Lama was made an honorary citizen of Rome on Monday. "We hope Italy ... takes immediate, effective measures to remove the negative impact and maintain the healthy, stable development of bilateral ties," an official said. **REUTERS**

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Comment & Views

Comment

Give gifts some thought

ModernLife

Georgie Binks
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What is it with men and gifts? How can a man who has written poetry for his lover, feted her with engraved trinkets suddenly show up with kitchen gadgets?

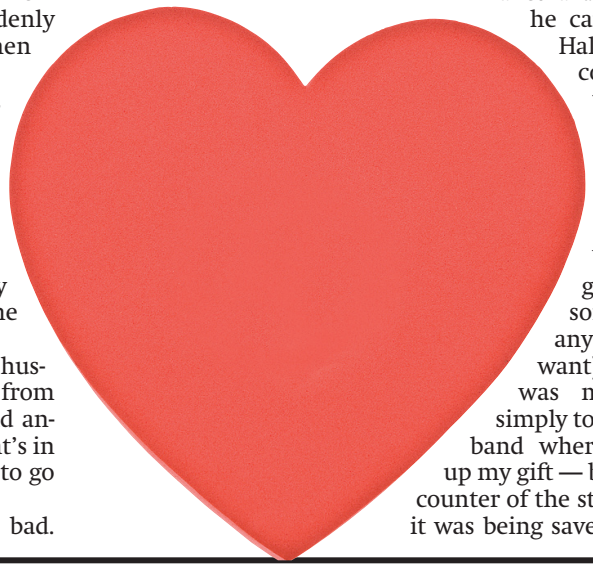
A blip on the radar, but mention this to other women and immediately the taps start flowing.

"At least you got something," moans one. "My last birthday my husband gave me nothing. Nothing."

Another woman's husband arrived home from work one birthday and announced, "Your present's in the trunk if you want to go out and get it."

Not all stories are bad. One friend's husband gave her a lamp crafted from a piece of driftwood he had found on a beach they had visited. A little weird, but thoughtful.

Another male friend tells me his wife wanted to learn to play the saxophone, so he bought her one. The next year she received sheet music to go with it. "The key," he says, "is listening. Sometimes I store it in my memory, other times my BlackBerry."



Valentine's**Day**

Ah yes — listening — an excellent way to figure out your gal. Alana Gun, who runs a gift basket franchise in Winnipeg, says, "Men have no ideas. If they do, it's to put flowers in a gift basket. You cannot cover flowers in cello wrap." (Speaking of flowers, what is it with men and carnations?)

What also is it that makes a dude think he can use the Hallmark conspiracy theory to calm a disappointed woman. (I should be able to give you something any day I want). When I was married, I simply told my husband where to pick up my gift — behind the counter of the store where it was being saved. Kind of took the surprise out of it, but that wasn't a bad thing.

Good gifts may not necessarily mean a great guy, but bad or no gifts start to grate on a woman. It signifies he doesn't care enough to listen.

Some guys just have it. When my son was six, he took my pink Post-it notes, drew an arrow on each one, placing them all the way up the stairs and into my room. On my pillow was a note reading, "I love you."

Guys, I can't tell you what to give because every woman is different. Try to remember past conversations for clues, even a word. Stressed = spa; sexy = lingerie; very stressed out = trip. (By the way, sex is not a present for women, only for men.)

For most women, it's not the thought that counts, but that there's been any thought at all that really matters.

Georgie Binks is a Toronto freelance writer who has written about gender and relationships for CBC.ca, Elle, Chatelaine and Homemakers.

Word on the street: Should Vancouver scale down its Winter Olympics plans for 2010 in light of the current economic conditions?

Nadia Quek
age 32, Vancouver

A: It's already a lot so maybe they can just focus more on safety and be more careful with their budget.

Aly Jetha
age 39, Vancouver

A: Absolutely not. The larger the Olympics, the better it is for the economy because more money will come into the economy.

Laura Steffen
age 26, Vancouver

A: Yes, because I believe that Vancouver is going to end up as broke as other cities have when they've had the Olympics.

Mark Weir
age 28, Ottawa

A: I think it should be somewhat scaled down ... If everyone has to cut back, I think the Olympics can maybe do without so many fireworks and things like that.

Amanda Young
age 23, Calgary

A: What I learned (at university) is tourism actually brings a lot of revenue to the city. As long as they can use the facilities afterwards, I think they should (spend the money).

Yusuf Gad
age 32, Toronto

A: Yes ... The people of Vancouver shouldn't get stuck with the bill knowing full well that the corporations are going to make money on it.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Why do religion and politics have a place in public ads?

Re: Atheist ads promote debate, understanding (Feb. 5)

In a time when people are losing their jobs, their homes and still have bills to pay, are these skeptics' bus ads really productive and necessary for the public to read?

What is the basis of promoting such ads? Is it to provoke others, to communicate a message or just to make trouble? Are these messages really positive?

In advertising, free speech does have limitations and a sense of responsibility. People just can't write whatever they like without public reaction and consequence, whether the ad is a public service or promoting a product or service.

I feel the money spent by skeptics to place ads is not spent constructively and is unnecessary when that money could have been better spent for charities, homeless shelters or towards a fallen economy.

Why do religion and politics have a place in any type of public advertising? These things could be left out entirely.

This is nonsense because we will never find a common understanding on these subjects.

LAURA GOMEZ, BRAMPTON, ONT.

Various religious groups have used advertising campaigns

Re: Atheist ads promote debate, understanding (Feb. 5)

I am not atheist, but I can't understand why people are so offended.

Various religious groups have used advertising and it has never been viewed as offensive. If we find this minuscule form of free speech offensive, should we not be offended if someone starts preaching about God on the side of the street and reciting a sermon from the Bible?

Many religions don't need to advertise on buses when they have billboards or television programs and channels devoted to their religions. Should someone that is not of that religion be offended?

After all, they are only voicing their own opinion through an ad on a bus, which is hardly harmful to anyone. Although some make it out to sound like an infectious disease that needs cleansing.

NICHOLAS WITHAM, CALGARY

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Book publisher HarperCollins to lay off staff

Book publisher HarperCollins, part of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., is laying off staff, offering buyouts and closing a division to save money as consumers cut their spending. **REUTERS**

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Bank governor still confident

Carney reassures legislators, defends his growth outlook

The Bank of Canada has plenty of flexibility to cut rates and expand liquidity operations if needed, but it expects a U.S. bank stabilization plan to mark the gradual return of confidence to the global financial system, governor Mark Carney said yesterday.

Grilled by legislators on a parliamentary finance committee, Carney also defended his highly questioned forecast for Canada's quick recovery from the recession to growth of 3.8 per cent next year.

Carney sought to assure legislators that the central bank has not run out of options to stimulate the economy and that, in comparison to some other countries, its rate cuts have translated into lower mortgages and rates throughout the system.

The bank has cut its benchmark overnight rate by 350 basis points since December 2007 to a 50-year low of one per cent. Its last cut was on Jan. 22 and its next decision is due March 3.

The bank has injected billions into money markets, peaking at $40 billion in December, and Carney said the bank stands ready to expand those operations if conditions warrant it.

> **"We do realism at the Bank of Canada. We don't do spin."**
> Mark Carney

In defending his growth projections, Carney said the bank used 21 different forecasting models but also applied a considerable dose of personal judgment to its outlook, because of the highly uncertain global financial situation.

"We don't do optimism, we don't do pessimism. We do realism at the Bank of Canada. We don't do spin," he said.

REUTERS

Live Nation's plan to buy Ticketmaster faces scrutiny

MUSIC The world's largest concert promoter, Live Nation Inc., plans to buy Ticketmaster Entertainment Inc. for about $400 million US in stock in a bid to create a company with dominant holdings in concert promotion and ticket sales.

But shares of both companies fell yesterday amid concerns the acquisition would be blocked by U.S. antitrust regulators under the new Obama administration.

News of the merger has already raised questions with regulators, music fans, artists and record labels who believe the new company will have too much power over the live music business. **REUTERS**

Forecast

- The new company would be called Live Nation Entertainment, and sell more than 150 million concert tickets a year and promote 22,000 concerts annually.

Shanghai **Sweet ride for Valentine's Day**

ALY SONG/REUTERS

Two women walk past a car covered with chocolate at a shopping mall in Shanghai, China, yesterday. The car was painted with chocolate to celebrate Valentine's Day.

HBC looks to Olympics for brand revitalization

GAMES The new owners of the Hudson's Bay Co. will face one of their first visible tests tomorrow when they unveil the Olympic torchbearer uniform on a stage in Whistler, B.C., as part of a high-profile one-year countdown to the 2010 Winter Games.

Canada's oldest retailer is hoping to revitalize its brand by linking its image more closely to the Games. As part of that effort, the company is launching a redesigned corporate logo, one that will be on the Olympic uniforms.

So far the company has failed to capitalize effectively on its position as the official outfitter. Indeed, some of the wilder-looking orange-print merchandise developed in conjunction with the Beijing Games languished in its stores.

Jeffrey Sherman, the executive who runs the parent firm, the Hudson's Bay Trading Co., said he believes success is just a matter of properly designing and marketing merchandise.

"I've been critical of the way we've under marketed our Olympic association in the past," he said.

Sherman said a lot of the Games-associated activities would be focused in stores, such as Olympic contests, which don't cost much.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Background

- Hudson's Bay Co. won the right four years ago to outfit Canada's athletes for the next four Olympics.

Business in brief

BANKS A quartet of top British bankers apologized for mistakes that brought Royal Bank of Scotland and HBOS to the brink of collapse, adding that the sector should rethink its increasingly unpopular habit of paying lavish bonuses. Politicians said yesterday the former bankers were "in denial" about the scale of their mistakes and accused HBOS of ignoring warnings that it was growing too fast, citing evidence supplied by a whistleblower from the bank.

AUTOS General Motors Corp. will slash its global salaried workforce by about 10,000, or 14 per cent, this year and impose pay cuts on most remaining white-collar U.S. workers as it scrambles to reduce costs under a restructuring mandated by its U.S. government bailout. Most of the jobs will be cut by May 1, and remaining U.S. staff will see pay cuts of between three per cent and 10 per cent for the year, GM said.

REUTERS

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Nike warns of job cuts
Nike Inc., the world's largest athletic shoe and clothing maker, warned yesterday that up to four per cent of its workforce could be cut amid an ongoing business review aimed at bringing products more quickly to market while reducing expenses. REUTERS

Business in brief

STIMULUS U.S. steel companies urged congressional leaders yesterday to maintain a strong "Buy American" provision as part of a final economic stimulus bill. Major U.S. exporters like Caterpillar and Microsoft pushed for either eliminating or substantially weakening the measure, which they say would raise the cost of public works projects and send a protectionist signal to the world. Canada, the European Union and other U.S. trading partners are closely monitoring the plan.

GEOTHERMAL Among scant potential alternatives to Russian gas in eastern Europe, experts say geothermal reserves could in the medium term be an option to reduce the dependence on natural gas.

REUTERS

Lions Gate drops goal

Studio sees 12% dip in revenue to $1.4 billion

Independent film studio Lions Gate Entertainment said yesterday it expects revenue and free cash flow to fall short of its original 2009 targets and 2010 home entertainment revenue could drop up to 12 per cent, sending its shares down over 28 per cent.

Lions Gate said it now expects a fiscal 2009 revenue of about $1.4 billion US, versus a target of $1.5 billion to $1.6 billion, and free cash flow in the negative $135-million range.

"That is a big miss. It speaks not only to the underperformance of our film business, but to our use of forecasting assumptions that in retrospect clearly have proven to be unrealistic," Lions Gate vice-chairman Michael Burns said.

The company's shares were down 28.5 per cent to $3.81 in afternoon trading on the New York Stock Exchange, after going as low as $3.65 earlier in the session.

Lions Gate posted Monday a wider-than-expected loss for its fiscal third quarter that ended Dec. 31, citing underperforming films like The Spirit and Punisher: War Zone.

New game plan

- Lions Gate now plans to release about 12 films in 2010 rather than the 15 or 16 released in 2009, and invest $100 million less in production, taking fewer risks.

The studio, home to the popular Saw franchise, was the latest media company to cite the current economic crisis and changes in entertainment patterns for disappointing earnings, much like Walt Disney Co., Time Warner and News Corp.

REUTERS

Auto sector 'catastrophe' global, says Peugeot chief

AUTOS The auto industry is caught up in a catastrophe that has spread across the globe as even the key emerging markets that manufacturers had banked on for growth have now ground to a halt, a top executive said yesterday.

Christian Streiff, who heads Peugeot-Citroen, said he expects sales at Europe's second-biggest-volume carmaker to fall 20 per cent in 2009 and sees further pain in 2010 as there seems no end in sight to the sector's crisis.

"What is striking at the moment is the worldwide catastrophe in the car industry because the Brazilian market, the Chinese market and the Russian market have stopped in their tracks, just like the European market. That makes for a fall of over 20 per cent," Streiff told RTL radio.

"The Brazilian market, the Chinese market and the Russian market have stopped in their tracks, just like the European market."
Christian Streiff

REUTERS

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9pm
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CBC
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Bosh to miss NBA all-star game

Toronto's Chris Bosh will not play in Sunday's NBA all-star game due to a sprained right knee. Bosh missed last night's 110-102 Raptor win at Minnesota, his third straight game on the sidelines. He'll be replaced by guard Mo Williams of the Cavaliers. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Hudec's Olympic hopes take hit

Canadian downhill skier Jan Hudec learned yesterday he will need surgery to repair a torn ACL in his left knee. The 27-year-old Calgary resident suffered the injury during a fall Saturday at the world ski championships in France. Hudec will undergo surgery at a clinic in London, Ont., in the next week. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: JOHN CHICK, JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Arrests linked to Phelps incident

PARTY A South Carolina television station reported yesterday that police arrested eight people in connection with the house party in which U.S. swimmer Michael Phelps was photographed smoking what was alleged to be marijuana. According to WIS-TV, police reportedly tracked down the water bong Phelps was photographed using after its owner allegedly tried to sell it on eBay for $100,000 US. Police have not confirmed the arrests.

Phelps

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Canucks rally to beat Blues

SCOTT RINTOUL
for Metro Vancouver

NHL RESULT

Blues 4 **Canucks** 6

THE SKINNY: Jannik Hansen's first goal in over a month proved to be the game-winner as the Canucks rallied for a 6-4 win in St. Louis. Vancouver fought back from three deficits with Mats Sundin scoring twice and Ryan Kesler once. Alex Burrows set a new career-high with his 13th goal while Pavol Demitra added an empty-netter to round out the scoring for the visitors.

THE PRODUCTION LINE: Though some of their points have come in special teams situations, Sundin, Kesler and Pavol Demitra have put up 22 points in the three games they've played together.

THE RARITY: The Blues lost for just the third time in 19 games when holding a lead after two periods.

THE RETURN: After missing 36 games with a broken leg, Andy McDonald had a goal and an assist fresh off signing a four-year, $18.8-million contract extension on Monday.

THE RATING: A great rally by the Canucks, but not the greatest game to watch. 3 out of 5.

THE NEXT GAME: The Canucks are off to Phoenix to play a struggling Coyotes club tomorrow night.

TIM PARKER/RETEURS

St. Louis Blues forward Andy McDonald delivers an open ice check to Vancouver Canuck Ryan Johnson yesterday in St. Louis. The Canucks won 6-4.

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Leave your landline out in the cold with tons of talk.

Hip flop for Kariya
Blues forward Paul Kariya underwent surgery on his right hip yesterday, only a month after an operation to fix his left hip. METRO NEWS SERVICES

NHL Stanley Cup preview?

ADAM HUNGER/REUTERS

Vancouver native Milan Lucic of the Bruins and the Sharks' Marcel Goc collide in Boston last night. San Jose won the game 5-2 in a battle of the top two teams in the NHL.

Tejada charged; guilty plea expected

Five-time all-star Miguel Tejada is expected to plead guilty today to lying to U.S. Congress about his knowledge of other baseball players using steroids, a legal source and court documents revealed yesterday.

Tejada, 34, the American League's Most Valuable Player in 2002 while with the Oakland Athletics, was charged yesterday with making the misrepresentations to congressional staff members in 2005 when he said he never knew of any other player using steroids.

Federal prosecutors charged Tejada in a six-page court document known as a "criminal information," which typically is used when a defendant has agreed to plead guilty.

The case involving Tejada was filed the day after Alex Rodriguez, the New York Yankees star who is the game's highest paid player, admitted using performance-enhancing drugs.

After Sports Illustrated reported on Saturday that he tested positive for testosterone and the anabolic steroid Primobolan in 2003, Rodriguez admitted to ESPN television on Monday that he took a banned substance from 2001 to 2003, saying he felt pressure to perform upon signing a record 10-year, $250-million contract with the Texas Rangers.

According to the court documents, Tejada told staffers from the House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in 2005 that he never used illegal performance-enhancing drugs.

Prosecutors did not accuse Tejada of lying about allegations concerning his own steroids use. REUTERS

BOB LEVEY/GETTY IMAGES

Tejada was AL MVP in 2002 with Oakland.

Avery assigned to Hartford of AHL

HOCKEY The Dallas Stars have assigned outspoken left wing Sean Avery to Hartford of the American Hockey League.

Hartford is the AHL affiliate of the New York Rangers, who have expressed an interest in bringing Avery back to the NHL team for which he spent the past 1½ seasons.

Avery

"I would like to thank Glen Sather and the Rangers organization for giving me the chance to resume my hockey career," Avery said in a statement. Avery was suspended by the NHL for six games without pay following comments he made in Calgary in December regarding his ex-girlfriend dating other hockey players.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports in brief

CFL Montreal Alouettes quarterback Anthony Calvillo announced that he will play in the 2009 season. Whether he would play or not was contingent on his wife's battle with cancer. The star said yesterday his wife, Alexia, is officially in remission from B-cell lymphoma. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Florida 5 Toronto 4 (OT)
Atlanta 3 Tampa Bay 1
Columbus 3 Colorado 0
Detroit 5 Nashville 3
Los Angeles 4 N.Y. Islanders 3 (SO)
San Jose 5 Boston 2
VANCOUVER 6 St. Louis 4

TONIGHT'S GAMES
Ottawa at Buffalo
N.Y. Islanders at New Jersey
Washington at N.Y. Rangers
Chicago at Atlanta
San Jose at Pittsburgh
Colorado at Minnesota
Phoenix at Dallas
Montreal at Edmonton
Calgary at Anaheim

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Toronto 110 Minnesota 102
Atlanta 111 Washington 90
Denver 99 Miami 82
Indiana 96 Cleveland 95
San Antonio 108 New Jersey 93
Detroit at Chicago N
Sacramento at Dallas N
New York at Golden State N
Oklahoma City at L.A. Lakers N

TONIGHT'S GAMES
San Antonio at Toronto
Denver at Orlando
Phoenix at Cleveland
Memphis at Philadelphia
Washington at Charlotte
Atlanta at Detroit
Indiana at Milwaukee
Boston at New Orleans
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Metro Drive

Vue from a class

Student engineers from three Canadian universities have unveiled their projects in the EcoCAR competition at the Washington Auto Show, Canadian Driver reports. The three-year challenge requires students to fit alternative technologies to Saturn Vue vehicles. The participating universities are: University of Victoria, University of Ontario Institute of Technology and University of Waterloo. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

The new BMW Z4, left, and the Lincoln MKT, will make their Canadian debuts at the Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto. The event kicks off this Friday.

New age dawns in Canada

The future's on hyperdrive at this year's Toronto auto show

MARK ATKINSON
for Metro Canada

Despite a challenging economy and a reduced market outlook for 2009, the Canadian International Auto Show (CIAS) makes its return to Toronto Friday. And while the weather might be cold and gloomy, the show itself will feature some of the hottest new models and technology influencing the sector today.

The event's theme for 2009 is "The New Era", a way to show the public that offerings are changing rapidly given the economic and environmental challenges facing the auto industry today. David McClean, CIAS director of marketing services, thinks the show is evolving with consumer tastes and demands.

"We used 'The Turning Point' in 2008, and it was clear the industry was evolving in a new direction, but there wasn't much in the way of tangible evidence yet. It was almost too early. This year, 'The New Era' reflects all of these global issues we're facing."

McClean is very enthusiastic about the new technology on display at this year's CIAS, including hybrids, diesels and electrics. "The public will get to see all the alternatives to the gasoline engine. And we have the new 'GTA in Motion — The Future is Electric' showcase, where they can see some first-generation electric vehicles on display."

Also, students from Humber College will participate in the show, and will "create and demonstrate electric mobility solutions that embrace the viability of the all-electric future."

Hybrid, electric and diesel technology has never been hotter, and you can expect the concept vehicles and debuts to reflect that spirit of change. "The New Era" indeed; four of the five concepts to be shown are powered by something other than gasoline.

The question, as McClean puts it, is "whether the manufacturers will be in a position to address these demands and challenges."

Already, some manufacturers, like Ford and General Motors, are calling for governments and the private sector to partner in investing in the infrastructure needed to support hundreds of thousands of plug-in electric or hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles.

Away from the "green" theme, some of the desirable machinery introduced will focus on high-end Canadian debuts, including the new Audi S4 and V10-powered R8, the BMW Z4, Lincoln MKT, Cadillac SRX and Jaguar XFR, while others are aimed at a more entry-level market, like the attractive Kia Forte and Chevrolet Equinox. And while they debuted at the Montreal Auto Show in January, funky vehicles like the Kia Soul, Nissan Cube and Honda's new Insight hybrid will surely attract plenty of crowds.

For coverage of cool concept cars at the Toronto auto show and more, visit metronews.ca

Top debuts in Toronto

- **Nissan NV 2500:** This is a world debut of Nissan's first in a new line of commercial vehicles that's set to challenge the likes of Ford and General Motors.
- **Toyota Prius/Lexus HS250:** Canadian debuts of Toyota's latest pair of hybrid sedans. Prius hasn't altered its look too much from last generation, but power and fuel economy are both improved. Upscale Lexus HS250 will be the first dedicated luxury hybrid model.
- **Volkswagen Golf:** Latest generation of VW's venerable hatchback has been on sale in Europe for a few months, but this will be our first up-close look. More a facelift than a complete redesign, no word yet on what engines will be available for Canada.
- **Ford Taurus:** From staid to stunning, the new Ford Taurus is the result of Ford's promise to improve its car-based offerings. Will offer the company's new EcoBoost engines, and is said to revive the SHO badge of the late '80s.

MARK ATKINSON/FOR METRO CANADA

Baby Mercedes Benz on a budget

BRADLEY HORN
for Metro Canada

Why did Mercedes-Benz choose Moncton as the venue to launch it face-lifted five-door hatch? Because it's the "New B" in New Brunswick! Get it? No? OK, so the Germans are far better at engineering than cracking jokes.

Actually, that Teutonic technical savvy has been a big part of M-B Canada's message in convincing cash-conscious Canadians that its $30,000 B-Class Compact Sports Tourer is worth spending a little extra coin on.

You see, for all the Audi A3s, Volvo V50s and Mini Clubmans the Benz has been shopped against since bowing into Canada in 2005 (but not the U.S.), it's also rolled in with the considerably less expensive Pontiac Vibe, Mazda5 and Kia Rondo crowd too.

So why spend the extra moolah? Well, admittedly that three-pointed star on the hood carries a lot of cache, but Chris Goczan, the B's product manager, says the badge also brings the automaker's reputation for safety, comfort and road manners.

The front-drive Benz shares a platform with its Euro-only cousin, the A-Class, both employing "sandwich" construction. No, not a German panini press, but a clever way of installing the four-cylinder engine almost on its side, so that in a front-end collision it's forced under, and not into, the passenger cabin.

Standard on all '09 Bs are ESP, traction control, ABS with brake assist, front, side and side-curtain airbags, active head restraints and a new feature that automatically activates the interior lights in a collision, making the vehicle easier to work on for emergency services.

2009 Mercedes Benz B-Class

Type: Compact
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Torque: 136 lb-ft

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Metro Workology exclusive: Matters of the Heart

Don't miss Matters of the Heart, Metro's exclusive feature series in the Workology section. There are jobs to be had that focus on falling in love, falling out of love and everything in between; we will be digging up the stories for you, so check for Workology on Mondays and Wednesdays and Metronews.ca/work as well.

Workology

Pro-life group charged

Several members of a University of Calgary pro-life group who staged a display of graphic posters at the university in November have been charged with trespassing on the campus. The university had warned the club that its members would be considered trespassers if they did not comply with the school's request to have the posters turned inward. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

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Be florally creative

Go for more than just flowers this Valentine's Day

NOELLE MUNARETTO/FOR METRO CANADA

Mastering the basics is key to being a great florist, says Marianne Suess of Seneca College's floral design program.

Matters of the Heart

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

Ordinarily, roses are red and violets are blue, but if you're getting an arrangement from Laura Tarbat's flower shop, be prepared to expect anything but the ordinary.

Tarbat's Toronto floral boutique, Poppies, has become famous for offering customers unique designs, rare buds and contemporary style.

"Our clientele is fairly young and not too traditional," says Tarbat. "They know they're going to get something really interesting and sexy. Not just 12 red roses."

Before Poppies, some of Tarbat's hand-designed bouquets also graced the dressing rooms of Elton John and Sophia Loren. And then there was Barbara Streisand. Babs liked Tarbat's work so much she even requested the bouquet be brought back to her hotel. But Tarbat, a 17-year veteran of the floral trade, insists things have come a long way since those early days of her career. With greater flower availability, a more fashion-conscious generation and floral design being recognized as an art form, Tarbat says she sees more young people attracted to the profession.

"The flower business itself seems to be getting younger, more exciting and more creative,' says Tarbat. "I just feel fortunate that I found my passion."

For Tarbat, the path to Poppies was anything but ordinary too. As a 20-something she began working in corporate communications, and later directed videos for companies like Proctor and Gamble Inc.

"Then I kind of cracked, I had had enough," says Tarbat. "I'd always wanted to be in the flower business."

"But for me it's just intrinsic. It just comes from inside of me. Once I got over being nervous about all the flower names I just realized I loved all the flowers and shapes and directions."
Laura Tarbat

One of her friends had a flower shop and offered her a paid job. From there, she began apprenticing under a well-known designer who taught her everything she needed to know about flowers.

"But for me it's just intrinsic. It just comes from inside of me," adds Tarbat. "Once I got over being nervous about all the flower names I just realized I loved all the flowers and shapes and directions."

Then in 2002, after spending many years designing at another popular Toronto store, Tarbat decided to branch out and open her own shop.

"I was confident that my personal design style was developed enough that it would catch on," she says.

Now that she has complete creative freedom at Poppies, Tarbat incorporates unlikely mediums into her arrangements. Fuzzy pampas grass, miniature bulrushes and preserved mushroom caps are all signs of a Poppies design. So is any combination of pink and orange — Tarbat's two favourite colours.

For those starting out in the business, however, Ontario's Seneca College's floral design program coordinator, Marianne Suess, insists that all wannabe florists need to first master the basics.

"They start with round and one-sided arrangements," said Suess. "And basic flowers like carnations, mums and daisies."

The 30 students of this one-year program then spend the second semester studying botany, mastering florist theory and gaining field work experience in shops like Poppies.

"This is an industry where you need to repeat and practice as much as possible," says Suess. "It's like an artist. It doesn't happen overnight."

For more Matters of the Heart exclusive series check the Workology section Mondays and Wednesdays or stop by Metronews.ca/work

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Cellular college trend
A number of American schools are looking into delivering courses in real time on mobile phones, complete with student chat rooms, faculty voiceovers, and self-paced tutorials. METRO NEWS SERVICES

BlackBerry use may lead to a lawsuit

WorkplaceLaw

Daniel Lublin
dan@toronto-employmentlawyer.com

When does the workday begin and when does it end? This is the question being put to judges across the country as lawsuits for unpaid overtime make their way through the courts. And it will continue to garner attention as our reliance on the electronic workplace, replete with BlackBerrys, home offices and remote access, ensures that the office no longer has traditional borders.

Pay for overtime worked is governed by differing employment standards legislation across the country. In Ontario, for example, while there is no daily overtime pay requirement, employers must pay time and a half for employees who work in excess of 44 hours in any week. While each jurisdiction has its own exceptions, such as managerial employees, professionals, such as lawyers and accountants, and IT employees, most workplaces are required to pay overtime to the majority of the workforce.

Although many overtime eligible employees are not specifically asked to work any extra time, the legislation is uniformly interpreted as placing the onus on employers to disprove these claims. This raises two issues. First, where an employer permits an employee, even indirectly, to work beyond the maximum amount of hours, it will be liable to pay him or her overtime pay. This is so even if the employee was not specifically requested to work after hours. By permitting an employee to stay at work or providing remote access to the workplace after hours, it has essentially allowed him or her to continue to work. In other cases, the employee is often assigned so much work, the employer will be deemed to have requested that the employee actually work longer hours.

Second, the legislation generally requires that employers maintain their own records of the time that their employees spend at work. Most employers fail to do so. Therefore, if there is an overtime dispute before a provincial tribunal, the employee's evidence of hours worked, which can be flimsy and generally based on recollection, may be sufficient for him or her to prevail.

Even where overtime statutes do not apply to a particular employee, the employer may still be liable to pay for extra time worked. Many employment contracts or workplace policies set out a daily or weekly expectation of time worked for salaried employees. Such statements, when found in a contract or manual, essentially create a promise that employees who routinely exceed these maximums will be paid for that time.

As well, while BlackBerrys are seldom used exclusively for business purposes, that alone does not render employers immune from overtime claims based on their use. Employees routinely fire off business emails from home, on public transit and even on vacation. When an employer supplies the device and then permits its employees to perform work-related duties outside of normal working hours, it has essentially asked that overtime work be performed. And with the dawn of overtime class action lawsuits already upon us, it won't be long before these claims begin to include BlackBerry use as a component of an employee's total time worked.

In light of the times, here is my advice to Canadian workplaces struggling to adapt:

- Review and revise employment policies and ensure that employees are not permitted to work overtime without the express consent to do so.
- Implement systems to monitor overtime worked and preserve the records of such time.
- Seek counsel to ensure that the specific overtime rules are understood and are attentively followed.

Daniel A. Lublin is an employment lawyer focusing on the law of dismissal; dan@toronto-employmentlawyer.com.

Teachers encourage parents to ask that their children be exempted from the FSAs.

www.surreyteachers.org

A message from the Surrey Teachers' Association

Set your heart racing

If you've already got Olympic fever, here's one way to quell it: Book a run on the Olympia Bob Run in the tony ski resort of St. Moritz, Switzerland. It's the only natural ice bob run in the world, and got its name after hosting the Winter Olympics in 1928 and 1948. See olympia-bobrun.ch. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Travel

NYC theatre deals

New York City tourism officials have trumpeted two new programs in recent days to promote the city's vaunted theatre scene. On the House, from Feb. 15 to March 1, includes two-for-one tickets at more than 30 Off-Broadway shows. Visit nycgo.com/onthehouse for details. Another new microsite, nycgo.com/broadway, provides the latest information about Broadway shows. Close to two dozen new Broadway productions will open in the coming weeks. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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The buzz on a unique tourism draw

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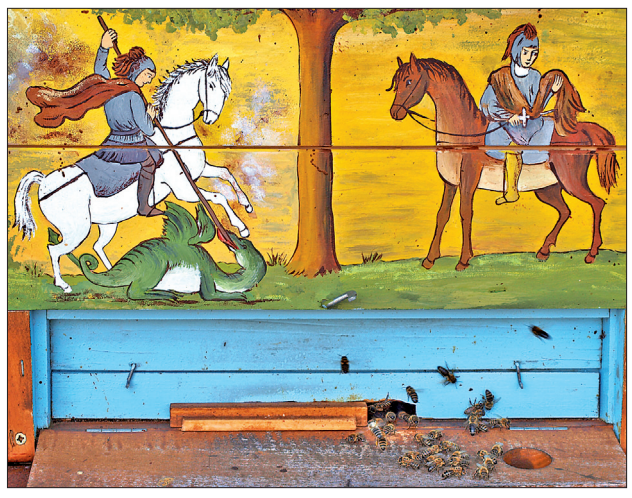

JULIA DIMON/FOR METRO CANADA

Janes Gregori, a member of the Slovenian Beekeepers Association, samples locally made honey wine. Right, Hive panels depict historical events, religious iconography and satirical village life. Slovenian beekeepers started painting the hives in the mid-1700s to help distinguish between colonies.

Some corners of the world entice visitors by establishing self-guided wine-country routes, but Slovenia wants you to take a road trip along a trail of beekeeping sites.

Dubbed beekeeping tourism, this relatively new initiative invites visitors to drive across the Central European countryside, stopping along a trail of specialty farms for a behind-the-scenes look at the honey industry.

In Slovenia, the art of beekeeping is so celebrated that its referred to as "the poetry of agriculture." Its one of the area's oldest rural activities, and with an estimated four beekeepers for every 1,000 Slovenians, it remains an integral part of the nations culture. "To be Slovenian is to be a beekeeper," goes a popular saying.

While there are plenty of agricultural farms and bee-related museums to visit, the best place to start your tour is the 130-year old beekeeping association, just an hour's drive from the capital city. There, I met Janes Gregori, a 66-year-old former biologist and member of the Slovenian Beekeepers Association, who shared a swarm of information about his craft.

In the mid-1700s, he says, beekeepers started painting the front of their hives to help distinguish between colonies. Hive panels have intricately decorated wooden fronts that depict historical events, religious iconography and satirical village life. It's a tradition that continues today.

I learned that Slovenia is home to its own race of bees called the Carniolan. This endemic species (now exported all over the world) is legally protected and is known for its gentle character, and hard-working nature.

Searching for a romantic destination? Try looking at home

AMBER BELLAIRE
for Metro Canada

Valentine'sDay

Forget Paris and Venice — with a little imagination, you'll find that Canada boasts plenty of locations to inspire lovers.

Ontario

Many package deals can be found for Valentine's Day visits to Niagara Falls, but if you're looking for something a little more private, and a lot more original, take hold of your lover's hand — and heart — and climb to the top of Ontario's highest point of land.

Temagami, in northeastern Ontario, is home to Caribou Mountain, a large hill with a steep cliff. It may not be the Rockies, but the region is home to a lake and forest, non-commercialized and indisputably private — a 2006 Statistics Canada report put Temagami's population at less than 1,000.

While a significant part of the area is home to an First Nations community, there's a provincial park with nearby cottages welcoming tourists.

Quebec

The ability to speak French is of course very sexy, but you don't have to be Pepe Le Pew to bring that extra bit of distinction to your Valentine's Day dinner. In Quebec City, you can treat your partner to a horse-drawn carriage ride down cobblestone streets and past 17th century architecture that's just dripping with European flair.

If you can't find a romantic spot in Canada, you're not trying.

Nova Scotia

Dating one of those people who always thinks they're right? Check out Digby, N.S., which has a population of 2,300 and coastal waters as clear as champagne. Its residents consider it to be the most romantic town in Canada — and they have an excellent case, but you'll never know for sure unless you go.

Alberta

Set the sights for your relationship high while gazing at the Rockies. Show how deep your love is by diving into one of Banff's many hot springs. Taking time out to appreciate natural phenomena can remind couples how nice it is to have someone with whom to share the wonder of life.

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Cruise cup up for auction
Tom Cruise's coffee cup is up for auction. A Brazilian website is selling the container reportedly used by the actor while on holiday in Brazil. So far the empty cup has a sale price of $2,200 US. **FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK**

Entertainment

Beach beauty
Israeli beauty Bar Refaeli — who is dating Leonardo DiCaprio — will appear on the cover of Sports Illustrated's 2009 swimsuit edition.
PEOPLE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Big screen romance

Movies are still a great option for date night

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

Valentine's**Day**

Ah, the movies. What better way to spend a frigid Friday night in February with your latest crush? Sitting in a dark theatre, close enough for your shoulders and elbows to touch, and maybe reaching for that hot, buttery popcorn or the Junior Mints at the same time.

Going to the movies has always been a good date-night option says Paul Dergarabedian, box office analyst for Hollywood.com.

"There's just something about dinner and a movie that really says romance," he said. "You can bond through the experience of enjoying a movie together and being able to talk about it after."

Movies are a great conversation builder and point of reference for people, he said. "So it instantly allows rapport to develop between you," he added.

But be careful, warns dating expert Kim Hughes, editor-in-chief for online dating site Lavalife, going to the movies is not always the best first date.

"You don't really get a chance to get to know each other," she said. The dating guru says that going to a movie on the first date is also too much of a time commitment.

"As a general rule we say great first dates ... are about an hour," she said. "Because that way, if it's fantastic, you can make a second date and go to a movie or go out for dinner or commit more time.

"If it's not fantastic, then an hour is a manageable amount of time to lose."

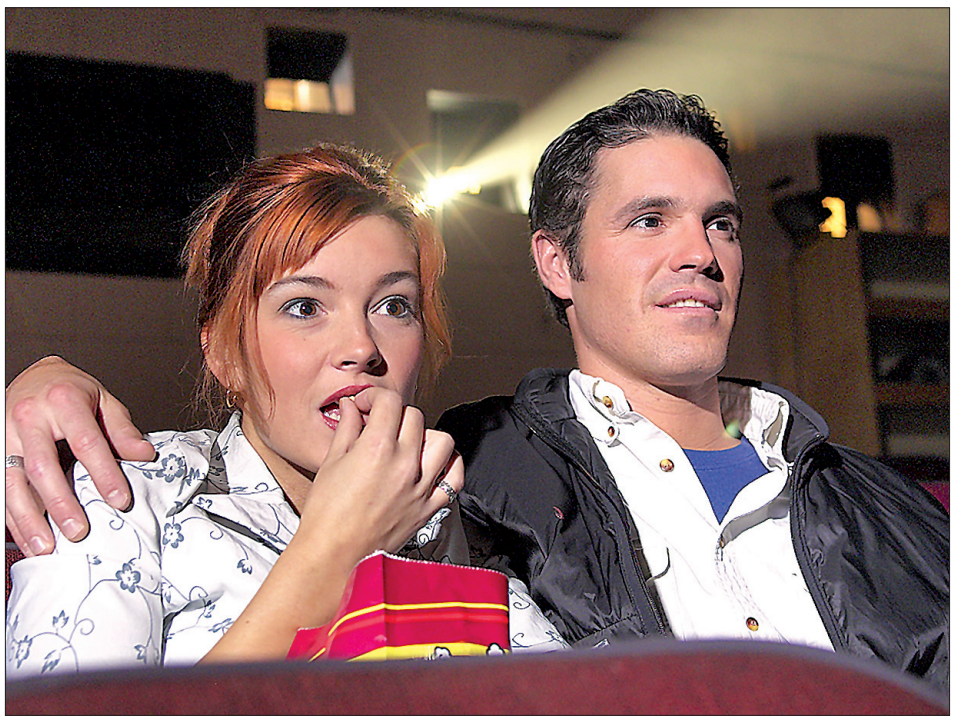
And although a romantic comedy might seem like a perfect date-night movie pick, Hughes suggests steering clear of them at the beginning of a relationship.

"I think that there would be kind of a squirmy factor with that," she said.

For Valentine's Day weekend, Dergarabedian suggests a good date movie — as strange as it may sound — might be the new version of Friday the 13th.

Romantic comedies such as He's Just Not That Into You and Confessions of a Shopaholic are also in theatres in time for Valentine's Day, but Hughes suggests these might be better to go see with friends.

Or, at least until you've gotten past those initial awkward stages of the dating game.



Movies are a great conversation builder, but not always the best choice for the first date.

Top romantic comedies

10. Bridget Jones's Diary
9. It Happened One Night
8. Groundhog Day
7. Some Like it Hot
6. Four Weddings and a Funeral
5. Pretty Woman
4. Moonstruck
3. Annie Hall
2. The Philadelphia Story
1. When Harry Met Sally

MOVIEFONE

"There's just something about dinner and a movie that really says romance."
box office analyst Paul Dergarabedian

SONY MUSIC PHOTO

The Fray's self-titled new album was released last week.

The Fray's new drama

BRIAN TOWIE
Metro Canada

The Fray is trying to prove that there's a band beyond TV appearances.

The four alternative rockers from Denver expect to hit the same heights with a new self-titled release that they did with their 2005 debut How To Save A Life. Consider it a more amplified version of what had The Fray topping the charts the first time around: Producers Aaron Johnson and Mike Flynn have returned to produce a work where catchy pop hooks and frontman Isaac Slade's personal lyrics will attempt to win over audiences in dramatic fashion. "We're not fetal anymore. Our balls have dropped," said drummer Ben Wysocki.

Slade added, "It's a funny thing to associate 'extreme' with The Fray. But in our range, we've pushed to the limit the kind of stuff that we've done in the past."

It's a tricky situation for The Fray. The band is undeniably successful in its own right. Over My Head (Cable Car), their first single about Slade's falling out with brother and ex-member Caleb (Isaac notes he's reconciled with Caleb after he departed from the band.), hit various worldwide top 40 charts.

But the global acclaim, award nominations (including a Grammy) and commercial success also owes much to major television and film exposure. Second single How To Save A Life entered the charts in April 2006. That August, ABC used the song to promote Grey's Anatomy following its appearance on a March episode of the medical drama. The exposure brought global domination. Digital sales of both singles numbered the millions, top chart spots became ubiquitous and the album consequently went double platinum. Fans of Grey's became fans of The Fray.

"I don't think any band needs TV, but it has been very integral to The Fray's success in the past couple of years," Wysocki says.

Therein lies The Fray's dilemma: How do you continue your success without falling prey to notoriety chiefly as a television soundtrack band?

"We've kind of looked at it as the icing on the cake," Wysocki says. "But there is that danger of having the audience associate you and what you do to the show when you have your own thing going on."

Tatum action figure
Channing Tatum is one of five G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra stars to have a Hasbro action figure modeled in his likeness. **PEOPLE.COM**

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The Game author offers Valentine's Day advice

DOROTHY ROBINSON
fMetro World News

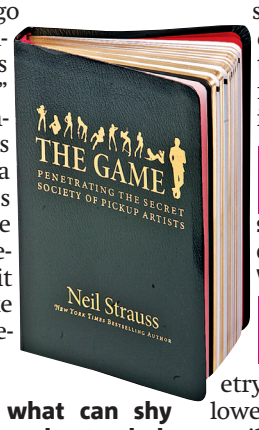
Valentine's**Day**

In 2005, author and self-described "average frustrated chump" Neil Strauss wrote an autobiographical account about becoming a master pick-up artist by using the tips from an underground group of men who considered themselves experts at getting the girl. That account, called The Game: Penetrating the Secret Society of Pickup Artists, was a huge best-seller and spawned a reality show on VH1 and a companion book called Rules of the Game.

Here, the nerd-turned-stud gives his tips to make sure next year's Valentine's Day isn't a lonely one.

Q Is Valentine's Day a good day to pick up women?

A It's a perfect time. The sense of aloneness is heightened by the marketing blitz [laughs]. And if you do meet someone around this time, you can go on an "Un-Valentine's Day Date" — essentially, it's like a Valentine's Day date but not really since it seems like you're rebelling.



Q So what can shy guys do to help their chances of scoring a date for next year's Valentine's Day?

A A lot of people just say, "be confident," but you can't be confident on command. The more pressure you get, the more scared shy guys become. But Marilyn Manson once told me, "If you act like a rock star, people will believe you are a rock star." Act as if you're secure, as though you are worthy of other people's time. Imagine yourself as Pierce Bronson — what would he do in a certain situation? So basically, just fake it until you make it.

Q What's your advice on sending flowers or candy to a crush for Valentine's Day?

A The No. 1 rule about flowers, candy and poetry is this: You aren't allowed to give those to a girl until you're sure she's attracted to you. If she isn't, it's the creepiest thing in the world. But if she is, it's the most romantic thing in the world. Err on the side of caution. If you're sure of the situation, just say, "A bunch of friends and I are going to this cool bar. You should come along." Keep it casual until you can figure it out.

U.S. newsstand magazine sales tumble

MAGAZINES Newsstand and retail sales of U.S. magazines fell 11 per cent in the second half of 2008, with celebrity and women's titles taking a hit as supermarket and drug-store shoppers cut back on their spending.

"Single-copy" sales of magazines in figures released by the U.S. Audit Bureau of Circulations on Monday performed worse than paid subscriptions, which were up less than 1 per cent.

Total paid and verified U.S. magazine circulation fell a bit less than one per cent, the Audit Bureau said.

Among traditionally popular titles at the grocery store checkout line, sales of US Weekly fell almost 21 per cent to about 1 million copies. In Touch Weekly dropped 32 per cent to about 1.2 million copies.

Hearst Corp's O, The Oprah Magazine fell 25 per cent to 836,770 copies, and Star Magazine fell 13.45 per cent to 712,980 copies. **REUTERS**

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Sexy serenade
Happy Birthday isn't the only tune Jennifer Aniston will getting for her birthday today. John Mayer has prepared his own serenade to help his girlfriend celebrate the big 4-0, a source tells People magazine. PEOPLE.COM

Designer says stay true to yourself

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Vancouver designer Christie Clayton got the boot on last night's episode of Project Runway Canada for creating a dress even she admitted wasn't true to her design vision.

Christie Clayton

Clayton, 30, was emotional and upset during the judging panel of last night's episode as she conceded to the judges that her garment — a dress with a silky top half and high waist shorts in the bottom half — just wasn't her.

She said the worst part was feeling that she hadn't stayed true to her own ideals as a designer.

"When you make something you don't believe in for people who are really important, it's really tough," Clayton told Metro. "I learned to trust my own judgment. The big lesson was to always follow your heart and trust your own instinct."

Now that she's off the show, Clayton is happy to be back at her own clothing line, Carny Love (carnylove.com), getting her new spring and summer collection ready. She admits the whole experience was worth it.

"I learned a lot about myself," Clayton said.

Tuesdays

- The second season of Project Runway Canada airs every Tuesday night on Global.

VA	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 2/11/09	251	308	3	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Week the Women Went		Being Erica "Til Death" (N)		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6	JOY	E! News	The Insider	Knight Rider "Fly by Knight"		Party Monsters: Cabo (CC)		Kardashians: True Story		News (N)
	254	-	8	M	Two-Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		Metropia
	250	321	9	CTV	etalk (CC)	Hollywood	American Idol The top 36 semifinalists are revealed. (N) (CC)				CSI: NY "She's Not There" (N)		News (N)
	-	-	10	OMNI	The Daily	Frasier (CC)	Stargate SG-1		Third Watch "Four Days"		Scrubs (CC)	Diya (CC)	New Day
	252	336	11	GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	Lie to Me "Pilot" (CC)		Life "Mirror Ball" (N) (CC)		(:02) Life on Mars (N) (CC)		News (N)
	256	389	12	VI	Instant Star	TMZ (N) (CC)	Lost "The Little Prince" (CC)		Lost "This Place Is Death" (N)		Law & Order "Crimebusters"		News (CC)
	253	359	13	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		13: Fear Is Real (CC)		Hates Chris	Friends (CC)	I Love Money (CC)		EP Daily
	-	-	14	CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	Privileged (CC)		90210 (CC)		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15	CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	Criminal Minds (N) (CC)		CSI: NY "She's Not There" (N)		News (N)
	287	379	16	NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	Knight Rider "Fly by Knight"		Life "Mirror Ball" (N) (CC)		Law & Order "Crimebusters"		News (N)
	602	568	19	W	Will & Grace	Friends (CC)	Grocery	Grocery	How Clean	Too Posh	Maxed Out	Maxed Out	Maxed Out
	288	380	21	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Lost "The Little Prince" (CC)		Lost "This Place Is Death" (N)		(:02) Life on Mars (N) (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	-	-	23	KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Club Paradise ★★ (1986) Robin Williams, Peter O'Toole.				King	Still Standing	Scrubs (CC)
	291	383	27	PBS	Ask the Governor (Live) (CC)		The American Creed (CC)		Looking for Lincoln Myths surrounding Abraham Lincoln. (N)				Back Care
	290	382	28	FOX	Two-Half Men	Two/Half Men	American Idol The top 36 semifinalists are revealed. (N) (CC)				News (N) (CC)		Family Guy
	-	364	43	PBS	(6:30) Looking for Lincoln (N) (CC)			Days-Counting	Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		African American Lives 2	
	296	654	64	SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Punk'd (CC)	South Park	Cheers (CC)	Half & Half	The Insider	Entertainment	Paid Program
	298	653	65	TLA	Two-Half Men	Two/Half Men	Privileged (CC)		90210 (CC)		KTLA Prime News (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	66	WGN	WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Family Guy	Two/Half Men	According-Jim	Sex and-City	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	My Wife-Kids
	297	652	67	WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Sex and-City	According-Jim	Paid Program	Frasier (CC)	Odd Couple
	199	311	76	STR	News (N)	News		Late Show-Letterman		Late Late Show		Will & Grace	Seinfeld
news	502	390	26	NW	La Corona		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		La Corona		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22	RSP	Best Damn Sports Show		Hockey	UFC: Access	The Ultimate Fighter		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30	TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			Off the Record	Preview	Preview	Winter X Games (CC)		SportsCentre
	411	457	49	OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman (CC)		Mantracker (CC)		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman
	410	403	54	SCR	College Basketball		Score Tonight		Hardcore Hockey Talk		Final Score	Final Score	Final Score
	417	406	55	SC	NASCAR Racing: Sprint Cup		NASCAR Racing: Sprint Cup		Speed Report Special Edition		Daytona 500 Memories		NASCAR Race
	416	409	144	GLF	Fútbol Alemania vs. Noruega.		Gol TV News	Samba (N)	Foot Brazil (N)	Legends	Paid Program	Gol TV News	Gol TV News
family	552	543	25	YTV	Prank Patrol	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Adrenaline	Prank Patrol	Falcon Beach (CC)		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	American Dad	Chicken	Father	Moral Orel
	557	541	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	The Suite Life
	553	546	56	TRE	Comfy Couch	Rolie Polie	Max & Ruby	Babar (CC)	Backyard	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	5	KNO	Canadian Waterways (CC)		Man Made Marvels (N) (CC)		Concert for Europe (N) (CC)			Concierto	Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20	CMT	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Three Chords	Tara Diaries	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Reba (CC)	Reba (CC)	Hope & Faith
	570	580	24	MM	Video on Trial	Video on Trial	PunchMuch		America's Best Dance Crew		disBand	Born to Be	Spotlight
	600	564	29	H&G	Hid Potential	Really Big Flip	Holmes on Homes (CC)		Property	Unsellable	Mansions	Property Shop	Hid Potential
	615	520	31	A&E	Bounty Hunter	Exterminators	Exterminators	Bounty Hunter	The First 48 (CC)		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter
	628	584	32	SPKE	UFC's Ultimate Fight Night		Ways to Die	Ways to Die	CSI: NY "A Man a Mile"		Disorderly Conduct: Video		Videos
	521	560	34	TLC	World's Tallest Woman (CC)		My Shocking Story (CC)		World's Smallest People		World's Tallest Woman (CC)		Mystery Diag.
	616	522	39	SHO	The Outer Limits (CC)		About a Girl	About a Girl	The Guard (CC)		Big Love "Dating Game" (N)		House (CC)
	620	523	40	BVO	Opera	Broadway	Law & Order "Born Again"		Without a Trace (CC)		Just a Kiss ★★ (2002) Ron Eldard. (CC)		
	601	562	41	SLC	Kimora: Fab	Kardashians	ET Canada	Matchmaker	Chop Shop	Mr. Friday	Trading Spouses		Biggest Loser
	520	505	42	DIS	Mayday (CC)		Daily Planet (CC)		MythBusters "MacGyver."		Austin Stevens Adventures		Mayday (CC)
	522	506	44	HIS	NCIS "Yankee White" (CC)		Cities of the Underworld		Museum Mysteries-World		NCIS "Yankee White" (CC)		Inventions
	627	528	45	SPC	Rabbit Fall	Rabbit Fall	Stargate SG-1 Alien invasion.		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Star Trek: Voyager (CC)		Star Trek: Ent.
	294	650	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	Seinfeld	10 Items-Less	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	The Prince & Me ★★ (2004) Julia Stiles. (CC)		
	619	525	48	TROP	Reality	Ad Persuasion	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	52	FN	Top Chef "The Last Supper"		Restaurant Makeover (CC)		Challenge "Tag Team Cakes"		Iron Chef America		Top Chef
	626	547	57	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Jon Dore	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	320	621	60	CEN	(6:30) Citizen Duane ★ (2006)		The Riddle (2007) Vinnie Jones, Derek Jacobi. Premiere. (CC)				Things We Lost in the Fire ★★★ (2007) (CC)		
	581	566	101	MTV	The Real World (N) (CC)		MTV Live	After	Next (CC)	The City	The Real World (CC)		MTV Live
	261	394	102	V	Tuscany		Poltergeist: The Legacy		August ★★ (1996, Drama) Anthony Hopkins, Kate Burton.				Paid Program
	-	-	109	MUL	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	Van. Nights	Iranian Pop	Sabor Latino		Sabor Musical	Travel TV	Patrol World

critics'corner

Lost
We need Dramamine just to keep us from passing out with all these twists. Locke (Terry O'Quinn) takes on the burden of trying to stop the island's increasingly violent shifts through time. Meanwhile, Ben (Michael Emerson) hits a roadblock in his attempt to reunite the Oceanic 6 and bring them back to the island in "This Place Is Death." Naveen Andrews, Matthew Fox, Jorge Garcia and Evangeline Lilly also star. 9 PM on ABC

Dog the Bounty Hunter
What starts out as a perfect day turns ugly fast when Dog and Beth buy bunnies for their kids. While Dog is enjoying himself helping the kids learn to care for their new pets, duty calls, and coincidentally it turns out to be a tough call to fathom. The charge: animal cruelty. The fugitive: a young man with a bad drug habit. The alleged victim: a kitten. The Dog loves kittens. 'Nuff said. 7 PM on A&E

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt
Metro World News fashion correspondent

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Birkhead still struggles with Anna Nicole death

Larry Birkhead says he still struggles with the death of Anna Nicole Smith, which happened two years ago Sunday. "It's hard to believe that Anna is gone," Birkhead — who fathered two-year-old Dannielynn with the actress — tells Usmagazine.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Rihanna delays her concert in Malaysia

CAREER Usmagazine. com is reporting that Rihanna has postponed a concert in Malaysia this week, an organizer confirmed Tuesday to the website.

Rihanna's Los Angeles-based reps informed Malaysia's Pineapple Concerts that a show slated for Friday would have to be rescheduled to an unspecified date "in light of recent events involving Rihanna," Pineapple Concerts said in a statement to the Associated Press.

Indonesia and Malaysia were the latest stops on the singer's Good Girl Gone Bad tour. The singer intends to travel back to her native Barbados to be with family, usmagazine.com reports.

The website adds that she is also providing "ongoing" cooperation with police during their battery investigation against Brown, a police source tells the Los Angeles Times. Unnamed sources told the Times that Rihanna (real name: Robyn Fenty) told police that Brown had hurt her the night before the Grammys.

Meanwhile, Brown who will be arraigned March 5, boarded a private plane leaving L.A. on Monday, Us magazine reports. The website also says Brown has pulled out of an appearance at the NBA All-Stars, a league spokesperson confirmed.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Jolie frets over earrings

PEOPLE Angelina Jolie lost a pair of multi-million dollar diamond earrings, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Changeling star left the Asprey jewellery she wore to the BAFTA Awards on Sunday in her suite at London's Dorchester Hotel when she left to return to the U.S.

The 33-year-old actress realized she had forgotten the earrings as she was preparing to board her flight and called hotel staff, begging them to search her suite.

A source said: "Staff got a frantic call from Angelina at the airport, urging them to take her room apart. Happily, the diamonds were found after a 90-minute search and promptly sent back to Los Angeles."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Hudson and Owen reunite

RELATIONSHIP Hollywood's on-again, off-again couple — Kate Hudson and Owen Wilson — are on yet again, people.com is reporting.

"They're back together," a source tells People magazine of the pair, who spent all of Sunday together at Wilson's Malibu home. Also there: Hudson's 5-year-old son Ryder.

Hudson, 29, and Wilson, 40, most recently reunited in Feb. 2008, when they appeared cozy at last year's Academy Awards.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Miley apologizes again for photo

APOLOGY Miley Cyrus has made a second apology over her racially offensive photograph, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Hannah Montana star — who last week spoke out about the picture of her slanting her eyes, but was later blasted for being disingenuous — has issued a more serious and heartfelt apology.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Spears to pay Fed $5,000 to see sons

PEOPLE Britney Spears will pay Kevin Federline $5,000 U.S. a week so she can see her sons while on tour, femalefirst.co.uk reports. It has been reported a deal has been signed by the Womanizer singer and her ex-husband, to ensure Spears has access to their two children while she is on the road.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Bullock doesn't rule out children

FAMILY More than three years into her marriage to Jesse James, Sandra Bullock says she enjoys being a stepmother — though she hasn't ruled out having her own children as well, people.com reports.

"I have family in spades," Bullock, 44, tells InStyle magazine for its March issue. The actress' husband has three children — son Jesse Jr., 11, and daughters Chandler, 14, and Sunny, 5 — from two previous marriages.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Duff defends remarks

CAREER Hilary Duff says she doesn't regret dissing Faye Dunaway, usmagazine.com reports.

After Dunaway, 68, criticized Duff's acting skills when she learned the singer, 21, was assuming her role in an upcoming remake of 1967's Bonnie and Clyde, Duff sniped, "None of my fans even knew who she is."

On Tuesday's Bonnie Hunt Show, Duff defends her remarks.

"She started acting way later than I did so I think I have time to grow and grow with each project," she says. "I am learning and work hard at my craft."

While Duff admits her remark was mean, she says, "It's not OK for people to take stabs at you and to say mean things for no reason."

Hunt tried to comfort Duff on the episode of her talk show, saying: "I think even Faye went through a time, if you look historically, where some people might have said that about her," Hunt tells the singer.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Richards' Dancing fears

CAREER Denise Richards called her last foray into reality TV It's Complicated, and she may want to call her next venture It's Scary, people.com reports.

"My biggest fear is just forgetting everything right before going on live, that's what I'm scared of," the actress tells People magazine about her new role as contestant on the eighth season of Dancing With the Stars. "All I hope is that I don't embarrass my girls."

Daughters Sam, 4, and Lola, 3, will be cheering on Richards, 37, throughout the competition.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Kanye parties with three women

PEOPLE Kanye West sneaked out of a Los Angeles nightclub with three women, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The rapper, who has been single since splitting from fiancée Alexis Phifer last year, was surrounded by females at the launch of Belvedere IX Vodka at Los Angeles' My-House last week.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Thursday Variable 6° / -2°
Friday Variable 5° / -1°
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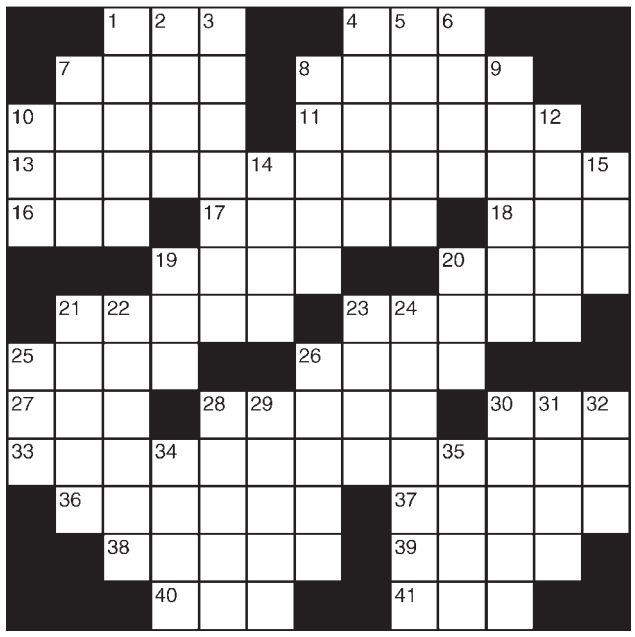
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Vacationing
4 Bribe
7 Duel tool
8 Stimulant
10 Gave it a whack
11 Light brown fur
13 Department store employee
16 "A Chorus Line" song
17 Circular
18 Anger
19 Exceptional
20 Oklahoma city
21 Invigorating
23 Spree
25 Appear
26 Colour quality
27 Branch
28 Streetcars' kin
30 High-arc shot
33 Storm-predicting agency
36 In layers
37 Shabby
38 Indigent
39 Hollywood clashers
40 Susan of "L.A. Law"
41 Lair

Crossword down

1 Put one's two cents in
2 Nourish
3 Men's hats
4 Reject with disdain
5 Made up one's mind
6 Pron. type
7 "— go bragh!"
8 Excessive
9 On the way up
10 Even number
12 Eagle's home
14 Drudgery
15 Roulette bet
19 Edge
20 Compass dir.
21 Jaunty chapeau
22 Go nowhere
23 Zero-star movie
24 Protected, in a way
25 Witnessed
26 Late
28 "... — Men in a Tub"
29 High-pitched
30 Spill the beans
31 Dinner for Dobbin
32 Purchase
34 Prepared to drive (with "up")
35 Anger

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	9	2					3	
8					1		4	
7			6		9	8		
	5			4		7		9
6		9		1			2	
		3	2		5			1
	8		3					5
	2					6	7	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

M	E	S	S		F	O	B		W	A	N	D
A	X	L	E		A	P	R		A	L	E	E
U	P	O	N		T	E	A	R	D	O	W	N
L	O	W	D	O	W	N		I	D	E	S	T
			E	R	A		F	O	E			
S	T	A	R	R		P	U	T	D	O	W	N
O	O	P			O	A	R			L	E	O
L	E	T	D	O	W	N		R	I	D	E	R
			A	W	L		B	U	N			
S	H	I	R	E		S	U	N	D	O	W	N
L	O	C	K	D	O	W	N		E	R	I	E
O	B	O	E		V	I	N		E	E	L	S
B	O	N	N		A	M	Y		D	O	L	T

2	3	6	7	8	5	4	9	1
9	8	5	4	1	2	3	6	7
1	7	4	9	6	3	5	2	8
6	4	2	8	3	7	9	1	5
8	1	9	5	2	6	7	4	3
3	5	7	1	9	4	2	8	6
4	6	8	3	5	9	1	7	2
7	2	3	6	4	1	8	5	9
5	9	1	2	7	8	6	3	4

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Butternut Squash Gratin

INGREDIENTS:
1 butternut squash, about 2 lbs (1 kg), halved crosswise, then lengthwise, seeded and peeled
1 medium red onion, halved and thinly sliced
1 1/2 cups (375 ml) frozen corn kernels, thawed
2 1/4 tsp (11 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1/3 cup (75 ml) grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:
1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Quarter butternut squash pieces lengthwise and then cut crosswise into 1/2-in. (1-cm) thick chunks. Combine squash, onion, corn and oil in large bowl, tossing to coat.
2. Arrange vegetables in a 13 x 9-in. (30 x 20-cm) baking dish. Bake until butternut squash is tender, 40 minutes, stirring halfway through cooking time.
3. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over vegetables and bake until melted and golden, 5 minutes.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
All is well, whether you know it or not. Don't argue with anyone who is on an emotional rollercoaster. Contact an estranged friend to apologize.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
You'll sigh with relief when you find you don't need to know everything. Be patient with an inconsistent visitor. A hacker causes a serious problem.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Ask if you want to know the true purpose of a visit. Increase your happiness without spending money. You're unscathed by a stressful situation.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Vulgar language upsets you. Your hunger for an adventure will soon be satisfied. A no-nonsense person will be unsentimental about the past.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Shabby treatment causes you to lose interest. The least said about a clash, the better. Outrageous news will come through outside sources.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Be careful about what you say. Commitment demands will be offensive. A confession is funny when temptation can't be avoided.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A spoiled brat makes you groan. Keep quiet about a secret deal. A casual observer will have much to say about solutions to problems.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Your anxiety about the future must be dispelled. Broken promises lead to an important insight. An important man needs your help.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
An injustice won't please you and you'll say so. Sharing your sadness will soothe you. Someone makes sense when he kicks up a fuss.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A man leaves sooner than he planned. Use your good judgment about choices. An insincere woman grates on your nerves.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
A slothful man tames a frightened friend. Surprising news will come from a sinister person. A guilty woman admits to witnessing an incident.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A service person clears up some confusion. A self-disciplined guy benefits from your friendship. Your worries will bloom if you overreact.

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WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. Aviate way, way up (1)
2. Pig meat metric unit (1)
3. Boot Ilsa's love in "Casablanca" (1)
4. More terrible hospital worker (1)
5. Crooner Crosby's bed coils (1)
6. Sexier one who ties sheepshanks (2)
7. Suppressing burping (2)

ANSWERS
1. FLY HIGH 2. HAM GRAM 3. KICK RICK 4. WORSE NURSE 5. BINGS SPRINGS 6. HOTTER KNOTTER 7. SQUELCHING BELCHING

2-11-09

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